

Unimas holds virtual exchange with Japanese students



EDUCATION

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AN intercountry partnership continues to flourish despite the Covid-19 pandemic.

In February, Universiti Malaysia Sarawak (Unimas) and Utsunomiya University (UU) in Japan managed to conduct a student mobility programme for the fourth time since 2018.

The first fully online edition of its kind, the week-long e-EduTour2021 saw the participation of 22 UU and 10 Unimas students from various faculties.

Officiating the programme were Unimas deputy vice chancellor academic and international Prof Dr Ahmad Hata Rasit and UU executive and vice president of research and global strategy Prof Dr Natsuaki Tomohide.

During the programme, aimed at enhancing the undergraduates' learning experience, the participants attended English language lessons focusing on several United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

The classes were conducted by instructors from the Faculty of Language and Communication at Unimas, while undergraduates from the university served as teaching assistants in the breakout sessions.

Through videos produced by Unimas participants, their UU counterparts were able to visit the Unimas campus, as well as explore the heart of Kuching City and its major attractions.

The participants also had the opportunity to teach and learn English, Bahasa Malaysia and Japanese, and exchange information about their unique cultures, traditions, cuisines, songs and dances through the activities.

Two speakers invited to talk to the participants were Unimas alumnus Jonathan Dason and S Batu Lintang principal Bahtiar Afandi.

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thrive in the working world, as well as contribute to community development.

Bahtiar offered the participants a glimpse into life in a Malaysian school during the live interactions. At the closing ceremony, the participants gave musical performances and poetry recitations, showcasing their English proficiency and appreciation of each other's cultures.

Present as guests of honour were Unimas vice chancellor Prof Datuk Dr Mohamad Kadim Suaidi and Tomohide.

The idea for a student mobility programme was first mooted by Unimas Assoc Prof Dr Souba Rethinasamy and UU Prof Dr Tatsuhiko Ohkubo. It was then developed by team members from both universities.

The EduTour programme was conducted at the Unimas campus in 2018, 2019 and 2020.

The partnership was made possible following the signing of the memorandum of agreement between the two universities in May 2017.

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